

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**2013 Kuskokwim Bay Salmon Fishery News Release 5
Districts 4 and 5 to Open to Commercial Salmon Fishing**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Bethel for commercial salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim Area.

District 4, Quinhagak

District 4, Quinhagak, will open to commercial salmon fishing for 12 hours from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 10, 2013.

Preliminary harvest from the July 6 opening, indicate a harvest of 670 king; 8,736 sockeye; and 16,281 chum salmon. Sockeye and king harvests were below average and chum salmon harvest was well above average. There is still a conservation concern for king salmon, which will spread out the commercial fishing periods until the middle of July. At that time, it is anticipated that the normal commercial fishing schedule will resume.

The Kanektok River weir has been in operation since June 27. As of July 8, total passage is 381 king; 43,341 sockeye; and 7,298 chum salmon. King salmon passage is well below average for this time, with sockeye passage being slightly above average. Chum salmon passage is about average for this time of the year. On July 8, there was a total daily passage of 211 king salmon. This was a good improvement in king escapement from recent days. ADF&G intends to fly an aerial survey of the river as soon as possible, weather permitting, to get an idea of how many fish are in the river below the weir site

In District 4 subsistence salmon fishing will be closed 8 hours before, during, and 4 hours after each commercial fishing period. **Subsistence fishermen must have their nets out of the**

Kanektok and Arolik Rivers and waters of District 4 by 1:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 10. Subsistence fishing will reopen at 1:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 11.

District 5, Goodnews Bay

District 5, Goodnews Bay, will open to commercial salmon fishing for 12 hours from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 10, 2013. The open area for this period is reduced. A temporary boundary line will continue to be in place, from approximately Big Beluga on the north side of the bay to Little Beluga on the south side of the bay. The boundary line is marked by buoys. District 5 will be open from this line to the western boundary of District 5 on the outside of the North and South spits. The outside boundary is marked by ADF&G regulatory markers on the beaches.

The open area of District 5 is reduced for the conservation of king salmon. ADF&G has determined that catches of king salmon on the Platinum side of the district are lower than catches on the Goodnews side of the district. This reduced area opening is an attempt to target abundant sockeye salmon while conserving king salmon.

Preliminary harvest during the July 6 commercial period was 60 king; 3,740 sockeye; and 2,336 chum salmon from 53 permits. The harvest of king salmon was low for this date and it appears the reduced area is effective for king salmon conservation. The harvest of sockeye and chum salmon were slightly above average.

The Middle Fork Goodnews River weir has been in operation since June 25. As of July 8, there have been 240 king; 15,960 sockeye; and 2,632 chum salmon passed through the weir. The king salmon passage is higher than the last couple years, but is still well below average. Sockeye and chum returns are below average as well.

In District 5 subsistence salmon fishing will be closed 8 hours before, during, and 4 hours after each commercial fishing period. **Subsistence fishermen must have their nets out of the Goodnews River and waters of District 5 by 1:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 10. Subsistence fishing will reopen at 1:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 11.**

The local processor anticipates adequate processing capacity for this upcoming commercial period. Fishermen should maintain contact with the buyer to ensure there is adequate processing capacity for their catch.

Fishermen are reminded that they may retain any portion of their catch for personal or subsistence use. Fish retained for personal or subsistence use from a commercial fishery must be reported and recorded in the space provided on an ADF&G fish ticket. Fishermen are also reminded that gillnet gear may not be operated in a manner that obstructs more than one half the width of any waterway. In the intertidal zone this restriction applies at all tide stages. Additionally, gear is restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size and 50 fathoms in length in a single shackle.

The Department will be closely monitoring commercial fishing periods to assess fishery performance and anticipates announcing additional commercial fishing periods as warranted. Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the state web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

Commercial fishermen are encouraged to consult Fish and Game regulations prior to beginning commercial fishing operations.

For additional information or questions regarding Districts 4 and 5 and Kuskokwim Area fisheries, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in the Bethel at 543-2433 or toll free at 855-933-2433.